

5 Ways to customise your Lent

These forty days of Lent can be your personal journey with the Lord, an opportunity to draw closer to him. Here are a few ways to make Lent special for you.

1 Step back and take stock

Keeping a journal during Lent can help your journey with the Lord stay focused. Take five minutes before bed each night to go over the events of the day, the people you met, the things you did, the choices you made. Was the Lord prompting you at any time? Did you notice him? How did you respond?

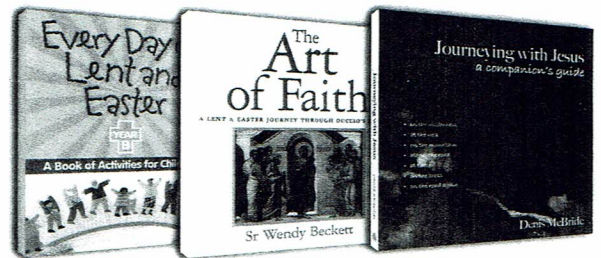


2 Lenten your laptop

Choose an inspiring Lenten image and set it as your desktop background or screensaver; keep it there until Easter. For online daily prayer try the Jesuit's "Pray-as-you-go" service, available in a variety of formats, including email and mp3 (www.pray-as-you-go.org). You can connect with other Christians, submit prayer requests and pray for others at www.prayerrequests.co.uk

3 Read about God

Choose a Christian book and read a little bit each day. Maybe ask a friend to recommend something – it might be a book you wouldn't have chosen yourself, yet it could help you encounter God in a new way.



"My hair's a mess... but I still look great!"

4 Give yourself a break

Say something nice to yourself each morning. Look in the mirror without being tempted to fix your hair. Be compassionate and forgiving with the person looking at you. Be tolerant: you're part of God's creation, fearfully and wonderfully made. Remember that God looks on you in this way.

5 Give each week a "theme"

Think about the journey Jesus travelled by concentrating on one event from his journey each week. For instance, in the first week, think about the wilderness. What did Jesus do there? What happened on the mountain? Other places to focus on might be the well, the road, the last supper, finishing with the cross. Try to find out more about Jesus' journey and how it can help you to understand your own journey better.



Gracious Father, thank you for the opportunity you have given me during Lent to walk with Jesus and through him draw closer to you. It isn't an easy walk. Give me strength and confidence, Father, not to abandon my Lord when the road becomes particularly tough these next few weeks. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.